
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1882

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1995 Regular Session

By House Committee on Children & Family Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Stevens and Boldt)

Read first time 03/01/95.

1 AN ACT Relating to an inspector general; adding a new chapter to
2 Title 43 RCW; and providing an expiration date.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** Unless the context clearly requires
5 otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this
6 chapter.

7 (1) "Chief" means the chief of the Washington state patrol.

8 (2) "Department" means the department of social and health
9 services.

10 (3) "Oversight committee" means the joint legislative oversight
11 committee created in section 3 of this act.

12 (4) "Patrol" means the Washington state patrol.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The position of inspector general is
14 created as an officer of the patrol. The inspector general shall serve
15 at the pleasure of and answer directly to the chief.

16 (2) The inspector general is responsible for oversight of the
17 department, ensuring that the department operates according to state
18 law and preserves individuals' due process. The primary focus of the

1 inspector general is to investigate allegations of improper family
2 intervention and other allegations of improper action or coercion by
3 the department.

4 (3) The inspector general may investigate allegations based on
5 referrals received from employees working within the department, the
6 secretary of the department, the office of the attorney general, or
7 from a hotline established for the purpose of reporting alleged abuse
8 by the department.

9 (4) The inspector general has full subpoena powers and access to
10 case and personnel files of the department.

11 (5) If the inspector general finds specific incidence of
12 impropriety, the inspector general may recommend that criminal charges
13 be filed or the imposition of specific corrective action. The
14 inspector general shall make recommendations to the oversight
15 committee.

16 (6) The inspector general shall report to the oversight committee
17 by June 1st and December 1st of each year on recommended changes to
18 laws that would better protect children and families.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** To review reports of the inspector general,
20 a new joint legislative oversight committee is created. The committee
21 will consist of eight members, four from the house of representatives
22 and four from the senate. The committee chair shall be selected by the
23 majority party and the majority party shall have two members from each
24 house.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The inspector general shall be appointed
26 by the chief on the basis of integrity and demonstrated ability in law
27 enforcement management, public administration, and investigations. The
28 inspector general shall have a minimum of five years of criminal
29 investigative experience. Within six months of his or her appointment,
30 the inspector general shall receive specialized training in the area of
31 child abuse and neglect. The inspector general shall report to and be
32 under the general supervision of the chief in all matters related to
33 fraud and program integrity.

34 (2) The inspector general may be removed from office only by the
35 chief.

36 (3) If the inspector general discovers that improper governmental
37 action, as defined in RCW 42.40.020, has occurred during an

1 investigation with respect to an employee, such as an abuse of
2 authority so as to impede or interfere with an investigation, then the
3 inspector general may report the improper governmental action to the
4 auditor under chapter 42.40 RCW.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) It is the duty and responsibility of the
6 inspector general to:

7 (a) Conduct, supervise, and coordinate investigations dealing with
8 allegations of improper family intervention and other allegations of
9 improper action or coercion by the department;

10 (b) Review proposed legislation and rules relating to investigation
11 of alleged child abuse or neglect by the department;

12 (c) Recommend policy changes as they relate to investigations of
13 child abuse and neglect conducted by the department; and

14 (d) Keep the oversight committee and the secretary of the
15 department of social and health services informed by means of reports
16 concerning improper family intervention or other improper action or
17 coercion by the department.

18 (2) In carrying out the duties and responsibilities in this
19 chapter, the inspector general shall refer all investigations in which
20 the inspector general has found substantial evidence supporting a
21 finding of a violation of federal or state criminal law to the
22 oversight committee and to the appropriate prosecuting authority for
23 possible criminal prosecution.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The oversight committee shall establish a
25 hotline to receive complaints of alleged abuse by the department of
26 social and health services.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Sections 1 through 6 of this act shall
28 expire on July 1, 1997, unless extended by law.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** Sections 1 through 6 of this act shall
30 constitute a new chapter in Title 43 RCW.

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